SIKKIM

GOVERNMENT GAZETTE

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Government of Sikkim
Rural Management and Development Department
Gangtok, Sikkim.

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NOTIFICATION

The State Government hereby notifies that all the Gram Panchayat Units shall constitute Gram Planning Forum (GPF) as described in the Notification in order to perform the duties and responsibilities assigned to the forum. The Gram Planning Forum is the most important formation in the decentralized planning system. It has the most creative role to play. The Gram Planning Forum is expected to add to the capacity of local governments to make good plans. It should assist the local government in developing a vision of what it should achieve – a vision based on experience, expertise and field reality as revealed from analysis of data.

Composition of the Gram Planning Forum

Elected members:

1. All elected members of the Gram Panchayat
2. The concerned elected member of the Zilla Panchayat

Ex-officio members:

1. One senior most official (by designation) from each of the department, who are working under GPU.
2. BDO/SDDO concerned.

Selected expert advisory members:
A maximum of five expert members to be identified by the GPU every year.

Selection of expert advisory members:

These can be retired officials, members of some local NGOs or any other persons who have good knowledge of the sector. These experts have to be identified by the GP elected representatives and approved by the gram Saba. While identifying these experts the following questions need to be kept in mind:

What is the past record of the person identified? Has he or she shown an interest in development oriented activities earlier?

Does the person have some special skills and qualifications that will be useful in the planning process? What are these?

Is the person motivated and interested in working hard to make the Gram plan?

It is up to the GP to decide how it identifies such people, but it would be a very good idea to have a transparent selection process. The GP could invite applications and then ask some experienced people (may be a District official) to help identify the right persons.

Chairman and Secretary of GPF:

The Sabapathi (President) of the GPU will be the chairman of GPF. The secretary of the GPF will be selected from the ex-officio members by the GPF every year. The secretary will also be the plan coordinator, and will write the plan document and make the budget as per the decisions of the GPF.

The Duties and Responsibilities of GPF in the Preparation of Plans:

1. To prepare Periodical and Annual plan for the Gram panchayat as directed by the state Government time to time.
2. To perform duties mentioned in the various Government guidelines including the Hand Book made for preparation of decentralized plans.
3. GPF shall collect data and information relevant for planning in the format prescribed and uses it for the purpose of planning after careful analysis.
4. To perform duties, which are required for perspective planning, fixing developmental goals for the GPU and identifying the ways and means to achieve it.
5. Preparation of project proposals, prioritization of the schemes/projects and selection based on the fund availability, resources and capacity to do it, etc.,
6. To find out the technical feasibility, financial norms, viability of the plan, and Administrative arrangements related to the selected proposals with the help of planning cell and DTSC.
7. Finalizing the proposals for the GP and making the Gram Panchayat Plans in the format prescribed by the Government with the approval of the Gram Saba and timely submission of the plan to District Planning Officer (DPO) for placing it in the District Planning Committee (DPC) for discussion and approval.
8. To have regular communication with the office of the DPO in order to be updated with Government priorities and directives.
9. Any other duties assigned by the GPU, ZP or the state Government by an order or communication.

The Duties and Responsibilities of GPF in Implementation of the Plan:

1. The GPF shall have the powers to monitor the implementation of all works implemented under GPU as it is composed of elected members and the department officials.

2. The GPF has to inspect the works through concerned working group and based on the report of the working group. The working group report has to be considered before clearing the bills by the Gram Panchayat.

3. GPF shall present all the executed/completed schemes in the Gram Saba for information. GPF shall maintain year wise record of schemes (sector wise) executed under GPU in an Asset register. The information contained in this register has to be used for future planning.

Working Mechanism:

While the GPF will be responsible for the overall coordination of the planning process, as the GP makes strategies and projects, it will need to focus on and consult experts and officials in different sectors or areas. To enable sector specific, detailed deliberations on strategies and to formulate projects to be included in the GP plan, each GP should set up 5-7 Working Groups. It is up to the GP to decide which Working Groups it will form. The Working Groups should however, cover all the issues that the GP wants to address. An example of the different areas for the Working Groups would be:

1. Agriculture, animal husbandry and other allied activities.
2. Forestry and forest related activities.
3. Infrastructure development including drinking water, roads and other public works
4. Non farm employment generation including industry, tourism and other activities
5. Health and Education
6. Poverty alleviation and welfare of weaker sections including women, scheduled tribes, children and the elderly.

This is just an example. The Working Groups should be set up as per the needs and goals of the GP and may change from year to year, depending on the priorities of the GP.

Composition of Working Groups:

All the GPF members will be part of some Working Group. Each Working group shall consist of a minimum of four members selected GPF. The Chairperson of the working group shall be an elected representative of the Panchayat. The senior most official from the concerned sector shall be the convener for the working group. The other members shall be selected among the members of the GPF based on their knowledge and interest towards the sector.

The functions of the Working Groups would be the following:

1. Analysis of the development sector(s)/area(s) assigned to it
2. Evaluation of the performance during the last five years in the sector.
3. Identification of existing problems, gaps, needs, possibilities.
4. Generation of a shared vision on the development of the sector(s)/area(s) through consultations with district level officials and District Technical support committee (DTSC).
5. Suggesting an action plan to realize the vision with priorities and reasons for the priority.
6. To deal with any queries related to the sector when the plan is scrutinized at district level.
7. Preparation of draft projects to implement the action plan.
8. Monitoring of projects as directed by GPF.
9. Any other task assigned by the GPF and GPU.

The GPF shall consult the hand book prepared by the Government for preparation of decentralized plans and follow the steps prescribed for preparation of plan. The GPF shall follow the Government guidelines in making the plans.

Constitution of GPF and Working Groups:

Every GP in the state shall constitute GPF and the working groups in the beginning of every financial year by following the above directives. The member details of the GPF as well as the working group shall be communicated by the secretary of the GPF to the DPO's office for records and further communications.

Frequency of meeting:

The GPF shall convene meeting at least every two months to perform their duties and roles. The quorum for the meetings of GPF shall be 50% of the total members. The copy of the minutes of the meeting shall be sent to the DPO and DDO concerned for information. The Working Group should meet as frequently as possible and keep a brief record of its deliberations. The quorum for the meetings of working group shall be three including the mandatory presence of the convener.

Role of Gram Saba in relation to GPF:

As the GPF is functioning for facilitating Gram Saba, the Gram Saba shall have all rights in accessing information from GPF. Gram Saba shall have all powers to give directions to perform according to the need of the

people of the GPU. Gram panchayat shall have the final say in any proposal/scheme proposed by GPF. The plan has to be approved by the Gram panchayat before sending it to the DPC through DPO.

Accountability:

The GPF shall work in line with DPC at District level and is accountable to the Gram Panchayat, Gram Saba and DPC. GPF shall be responsible for timely submission of the Gram Panchayat plans as per the time schedule prescribed by the Government in the Guidelines and thus accountable to the state Government for timely submission.

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